

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

BLEEDING DISORDERS AWARENESS MONTH

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, March 2016 marks the 30th anniversary of President Ronald Reagan's one-time declaration of March 1986 as Hemophilia Awareness Month. The goal of Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month, as we now call it, is to augment awareness of hemophilia and all inheritable bleeding disorders, which unfortunately have no cure in sight. These incurable, hereditary disorders affect millions of Americans each day. Roughly 1 million Americans suffer from Von Willebrand disease (VMD), a genetic bleeding disorder which prevents blood from clotting properly due to a defective blood protein, and around 20,000 are affected by hemophilia, a rare genetic bleeding disorder that prevents blood from clotting properly—for people with hemophilia, a simple cut can be life-threatening. Consequently, treatment is costly; it involves life-long infusions of clotting factor therapies which serve as a replacement for missing or deficient blood clotting proteins.

Although treatment for Americans affected by bleeding disorders can be costly, it has improved immensely. Given the tremendous advances in treating hemophilia, with proper treatment and self-care, most people with hemophilia can maintain an active, productive lifestyle. However, the costs of treatment for individuals with inherited bleeding disorders can still be improved with increased awareness, research, and education.

For instance, the CDC Division of Blood Disorders conducts Hemophilia Treatment Center research and this research recently resulted in a more effective test for inhibitors, a complication of hemophilia. Medical innovations like this are made possible through extensive research and are an effective means to reduce treatment costs and increase diagnoses for individuals with hemophilia and related inherited blood issues. Awareness, research, and education are some of the most effective ways to improve care for Americans with inherited bleeding disorders and Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month helps elevate all three.

HONORING CSUCI PRESIDENT DR.
RICHARD RUSH

HON. JULIA BROWNLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Dr. Richard R. Rush, a remarkable visionary and extraordinary leader in our community. Dr. Rush has served as the inaugural President of California State Uni-

versity Channel Islands for the past 15 years, and has dedicated himself to higher education as both an educator and administrator for over 40 years. As the founding President of California State University Channel Islands, Dr. Rush played a vital role in the growth and development of Ventura County's first four-year public university.

Since his first day as President, Dr. Rush has sought to ensure that the students of California State University Channel Islands receive a world-class college education. Dr. Rush developed programs that have positively shaped the identity and commitment of the university to students of all socioeconomic backgrounds. Thanks to his outreach to underserved students in the community, California State University Channel Islands earned the federal designation of a Hispanic-Serving Institution.

Furthermore, a cornerstone of Dr. Rush's time at California State University Channel Islands has been building meaningful and significant partnerships throughout the community. From forging relationships with Cottage Hospital, which led to the expansion of the nursing program, to developing a cooperative agreement with the Channel Islands National Park, which began the establishment of the Santa Rosa Island Research Station, Dr. Rush has been a strong leader in creating local working partnerships that will continue on as his legacy. Acting as a collaborative relationship builder, he sought partnerships with businesses in the community to ensure a strong curriculum and create greater learning opportunities for students.

Dr. Rush exemplifies true visionary leadership and is a treasure to our community. Throughout his lifetime dedication to higher education, Dr. Rush has been recognized with accolades regionally and nationally, including the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators' President's Award, the California State Student Association's President of the Year Award, and the Distinguished Community Leader Award from the Ventura County Leadership Academy.

I graciously applaud Dr. Rush for his dedication to California State University Channel Islands, and to Ventura County as a whole. It has been my great honor to work with Dr. Rush throughout the years. The legacy Dr. Rush has built extends past the university and well into the roots of our community. I thank him for being instrumental in creating an institution of higher education in Ventura County that will educate generations to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, March 14 and Tuesday, March 15, I was unavoidably detained in my Congressional district. As a result, I missed the following recorded votes:

On roll call Number 111, passage of S. 2426, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

On roll call Number 112, passage of House Concurrent Resolution 75. As a cosponsor, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

On roll call Number 113, passage of House Concurrent Resolution 121. As a strong supporter, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

I am pleased that my colleagues in the House voted unanimously to condemn those who commit genocide against Christians, and call these actions exactly what they are, war crimes. It is my sincere desire that both houses of Congress and the President would speak and act with a unified voice against the atrocities that are being committed against Christians in the Middle East by the Islamic State and other terrorist organizations on a daily basis.

On roll call Number 114, ordering the previous question of House Resolution 640, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

On roll call Number 115, agreeing to House Resolution 640, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

On roll call Number 116, passage of H.R. 2081, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

On roll call Number 117, passage of H.R. 3447, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

On roll call Number 118, adoption of an amendment to H.R. 3797, had I been present I would have voted "no."

On roll call Number 119, adoption of an amendment to H.R. 3797, had I been present I would have voted "no."

On roll call Number 120, adoption of an amendment to H.R. 3797, had I been present I would have voted "no."

On roll call Number 121, adoption of an amendment to H.R. 3797, had I been present I would have voted "no."

On roll call Number 122, motion to recommit H.R. 3797 with instructions, had I been present I would have voted "no."

On roll call Number 123, passage of H.R. 3797, had I been present I would have voted "yes."

VETERANS WHO RETURN HOME WITH THE MENTAL WOUNDS OF WAR

SPEECH OF

HON. RYAN A. COSTELLO

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, last year, Congress took an important step towards improving mental health services for our veterans. The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act was a landmark, bipartisan effort that improved suicide prevention programs and mental health care at the Department of Veterans

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Affairs (VA). I was proud to cosponsor and to vote in support of that legislation, but more needs to be done.

You do not have to look hard to see the need for critical mental health care and services for our veterans. Among servicemembers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, nearly 20% suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or depression, and during deployment, 18.5% report experiencing a traumatic brain injury (TBI). However, only 50% of servicemembers seek treatment. As a member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, I am working tirelessly to help those returning from the battlefield who face these mental health challenges.

Mr. Speaker, Congress can combat PTSD and TBI through greater awareness, prevention, and research. We can work with the VA and interested stakeholders to take common-sense steps to address staffing shortages, improve family support services, and increase access to services during non-business hours.

Likewise, we need to allow our veterans the freedom to receive mental health care at non-VA facilities. We cannot allow bureaucracy to stand in the way of veterans receiving the critical treatment and services they need. H.R. 1604, the Veterans Mental Health Care Access Act, introduced by Congressman MACARTHUR, would do just that. I am proud to cosponsor this legislation.

Congressman ZELDIN has introduced H.R. 4513, the PFC Joseph P. Dwyer Veteran Peer Support Program, to provide 24/7 peer-to-peer mental health services for veterans, reservists, and National Guardsmen. Our men and women in uniform deserve a strong support system, and this is one way we can ensure they have a trusted sense of community whenever they need it.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TAMMY DUCKWORTH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. Speaker, on March 14, 2016, on Roll Call Number 111 on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass S. 2426, To direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan in the International Criminal Police Organization, and for other purposes, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on S. 2426.

On March 14, 2016, on Roll Call Number 112 on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, as Amended, to H. Con. Res. 75, Expressing the sense of Congress that those who commit or support atrocities against Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities and who target them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, are committing, and are hereby declared to be committing, "war crimes", "crimes against humanity", and "genocide", I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on H. Con. Res. 75.

On March 14, 2016, on Roll Call Number 113 on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, as Amended, to H. Con. Res. 121, Ex-

pressing the sense of the Congress condemning the gross violations of international law amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity by the Government of Syria, its allies, and other parties to the conflict in Syria, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on H. Con. Res. 121.

AN INFORMAL TREATISE ON IMMIGRATION

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Conor Devlin attends Thompkins School in Katy, Texas. The essay topic is: An Informal Treatise on Immigration.

Something that has been plaguing my mind, most of western Europe, and this presidential cycle, is immigration. Initially, let me delineate "refugees" and economic migrants because many people, especially the authoritarian left, like to use a sweeping generalization and label them all refugees when they are clearly not. Refugees are people who are forced to leave their country due to war, extreme persecution and natural disasters. An excellent example would be the Kurds in northern Iraq, who are currently in battle with the Turks, ISIS, and Russia, and the middle eastern Christians who are being executed and forcibly converted by ISIS and Islamic regimes. These people are the embodiment of refugees; the Kurds are fleeing from war and persecution and the Christians are fleeing from extreme persecution and discrimination. On the other hand we have the economic migrants who are abandoning their countries and arriving at the border of Europe by the thousands. These, predominantly male muslims, have no desire to assimilate into Europe despite what many of Europe's leaders may think, and they simply arrive wanting to receive benefits and free money from the European governments who seem all so willing to give them.

The issue stems from the seemingly unwillingness on behalf of many leaders in the EU who simply do not want to be branded as racists for proposing the idea that introducing a population of people who are antagonistic and loathe the European culture could possibly be a bad idea. The word racism thus becomes the metaphorical boogeyman who all politicians seek to avoid as the ruinous label will practically cut short their career. With this in mind it is easily understandable why so many people seem to reject common sense when dealing with a crisis of such a scale as this. If they

speak out they will be silenced and utterly destroyed by their supposed friends and their own media. An atmosphere of fear has allowed the migrant crisis to take hold of all of Europe and install a brand new culture of violence and danger—something not yet witnessed in the largely peaceful and safe continent.

Another reason the crisis is still occurring is due to politicians' enthrallment with the idea of cultural relativism. Cultural relativism is the idea that all cultures are seemingly equal ergo importing all of these middle eastern men will have no negative effects on society because their culture, where women are gang raped beaten and killed, where gays are killed, and where followers of other religions are persecuted, is seemingly equal to egalitarian free western culture. But it is not, their culture is degenerate and incompatible with western culture.

Censorship and cultural relativism are leading the way to a disastrous future in Europe and in order to see what lies ahead for the US one would need to simply gaze across the pond at our embattled allies.

RECOGNIZING JAN TULK

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO and I rise today to recognize Jan Tulk, who recently retired after 30 years of dedicated service with Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) and SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory.

After years of service at the California Coastal Commission, Jan began as LLNL's first environmental attorney in 1985. In 1994, she was named Laboratory Counsel, managing a staff of 25 and offering advice and representation to senior managers on a wide range of complex legal issues.

In 2001, Jan became Associate Director for Administration and Human Resources while also retaining her Laboratory Counsel position for another three years. In this new role she led a staff of about 340 employees fulfilling all of the lab's personnel and administrative functions.

In 2007, Jan was named Senior Advisor to the Director and Special Counsel—a member of the senior management team giving advice on a variety of issues while also providing support in environmental law and litigation.

In 2012, Jan moved to SLAC to lead the Contract Management Group and the Research Partnership and Commercialization Office. In 2013, she became the lab's Chief of Staff, helping director Dr. Chi-Chang Kao work efficiently with SLAC staff and key stakeholders. She also played a major role in SLAC's transformation over the last few years and, being one of the few female leaders in the Department of Energy national laboratory system, Jan championed diversity and inclusion in the lab.

We rise today to recognize Jan Tulk's decades of service to these institutions which push our knowledge and our technology ever forward. She has been an invaluable asset, and we wish her the very best in her well-earned retirement.

IN HONOR OF GEORGE E.
NORCROSS III

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my brother, George E. Norcross III, on his 60th birthday.

George is a longtime advocate for South Jersey, philanthropist, and a superb husband, father, son and older brother.

George was born in Cooper University Hospital in Camden, the hospital he now leads as Chairman of the Board of Trustees. The oldest son of a labor leader and a home maker who later went on to work in social services, our parents, Carol and George E. Norcross, Jr., George has paved a path fundamentally his own.

After briefly attending Rutgers-Camden, my brother received his real estate and insurance licenses and started his own company. That company known today as Conner Strong & Buckelew, has become one of the nation's premier insurance, risk management and employment benefits brokerage and consulting firms.

But as successful as George has been in business, it has been his commitment to Camden and all of South Jersey that will be his defining legacy. As Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Cooper University Health System and Cooper University Hospital in Camden, New Jersey, where he has been a trustee since 1990, George has lead the transformation of Cooper into a top-tier tertiary academic medical center and launched the Cooper Medical School of Rowan University and opened the MD Anderson Cooper Cancer Center. George and his wife, Sandy, serve as co-chairs of The Cooper Gala, the largest fundraising event in South Jersey each year.

Through the Norcross Family Foundation, George is working to improve education for youth, funding research to help cure diseases, supporting the arts and culture, improving the community's safety, and helping people with disabilities. The Norcross Foundation also partnered with KIPP to open the KIPP Cooper Norcross Academy and George has been a longtime benefactor of the Larc School in New Jersey, which serves children with disabilities.

Accordingly, George has been honored with numerous awards for his contributions to the community including the Annual Champion of Children Award by the Camden Children's Garden and the Tree of Life Award from the Jewish National Fund. In 2013 he was honored by the New Jersey March of Dimes at the organization's Born to Shine Gala, and he recently was awarded the 2015 Haas Regional Champion Medal by the United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my wife, Andrea, and with love from my brothers, John and Phil, I wish my oldest brother, George E. Norcross III, a happy birthday, congratulate him for a brilliant first 60 years, and hope he has many more to come.

TWO TIME PURPLE HEART—J.H.
HICKS

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today, it is my honor to pay tribute to an American hero and longtime Texan: J.H. Hicks. J.H. served his country bravely during World War II, receiving two Purple Hearts. He was born in Woodville, Oklahoma on January 10, 1922, but got to Texas as fast as he could—moving to Houston in 1927, at the age of 5, and settling in Spring Branch for the next 88 years. In 1941, J.H. graduated from Reagan High School, however, the months following his graduation would be anything but conventional.

On December 8, 1941, one day after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Hicks bravely enlisted in the Marines at the age of 18. He was sent to basic training in California in 1942 and subsequently deployed to the Pacific, where he served with the United States Marine Corps aviation unit, MAG-1, over the next 4 years. During his time with MAG-1, Hicks was commissioned to a Marine Torpedo Bomber Squadron or a VMTB Aircraft. Flying with this VMTB Aircraft, Hicks fought in the Solomon Island Campaign, on Munda Island, and in the Battle of Guadalcanal in 1942.

While fighting in the Battle of Guadalcanal, Hicks's plane was intercepted by enemy combatants and attacked. The attack resulted in his plane crashing in the jungle near the Munda airstrip. This crash left him with a broken leg, 8 bullet wounds, and was labeled M.I.A. For two days, Hicks was missing in the jungle, wounded. After he was found, J.H. received a Purple Heart and a battlefield promotion to First Sergeant for his sacrifice.

After four years with MAG-1, a Purple Heart, and a battlefield promotion to First Sergeant, Hicks moved back to Houston where he lived for two years. After two years of job hunting, he decided to reenlist. The Marines were naturally his first choice, given his history, but, when the Marines wouldn't recognize his rank of First Sergeant upon reenlistment, he opted for the Air Force. While with the Air Force in 1945, J.H. fought in one of the most important battles of WWII, the battle of Okinawa. As a result of the battle, Hicks received his second Purple Heart.

It is heroes like J.H. Hicks who remind us freedom isn't free—remind us that day in and day out brave men and women put their lives on the line, and often sacrifice all, to protect our freedoms. Hicks's loyalty, leadership, and patriotism is unparalleled and stands as a shining example to the type of people who call Texas home.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING MR. PAUL BONDERSO

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Paul Bonderson,

President of the Ducks Unlimited (DU) conservation group, for his tireless commitment to educational and conservation initiatives in the State of California.

Mr. Bonderson's passion for wildlife and the environment began early in life, accompanying his father and grandfather on early-morning duck hunting trips throughout his childhood. As he put it, "I have always been an outdoor person. I have a great appreciation for the outdoors and am aware of how much it's been destroyed." A lifelong Californian, Mr. Bonderson graduated from Sacramento's Encina Preparatory High School before attending California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo. He began working with Ducks Unlimited in 2000, and became the group's 43rd President in June 2015.

From 2001 to 2006, Mr. Bonderson oversaw the acquisition of 2,500 acres of land in Butte County. The land had previously been used for rice production, but Mr. Bonderson has restored the property to its natural habitat. Today, the property—known as Birdhaven Ranch—is home to thousands of ducks, and provides invaluable wetlands educational opportunities for local high school and college students. These conservation and education efforts are especially critical in California, which has lost over 95 percent of its historic wetlands. And as President of DU, he has set forth an admirably ambitious agenda: Mr. Bonderson hopes to raise \$2 billion for waterfowl and wildlife conservation as part of the group's "Rescue Our Wetlands—Banding Together for Waterfowl" campaign.

Mr. Bonderson has also helped lead efforts to restore North America's Boreal Forest. The forest, over one billion acres of pristine wildlife habitat, is home to 14 million ducks during breeding season, and is threatened by expanding energy, mining and agriculture sectors. In partnership with Pew Charitable Trusts, DU has permanently protected millions of acres of forest, aiming to eventually preserve at least 50 percent of all Boreal territory on the continent.

Mr. Speaker, Paul Bonderson has worked tirelessly to preserve our nation's natural beauty. His commendable efforts will ensure that our country's pristine lands will be enjoyed by future generations, and it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House Chamber for votes on Tuesday, March 15, 2016. I would like to show that, had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on roll call votes 114, 115, and 123. I would have also voted "yea" on 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121 and 122.

IN HONOR OF THE TOWN OF FLORENCE ARIZONA'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the historic Town of Florence, Arizona. Founded in 1866, Florence is one of the oldest European settlements in the state and is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year.

Scenic Florence is home to many prominent geographical landmarks that contribute to Arizona's picturesque beauty such as the Gila River, Box Canyon and the Casa Grande Ruins. Florence serves as the final resting place for the Father of Arizona, Charles D. Poston. Moreover, the town admirably provides the state with employees for the nine correctional operations in Florence. It also serves as a connection point for three major transportation corridors in the state. Over time, Florence has developed a fanciful history as a model wild-west establishment. Its notable downtown, Old Silverbell copper Mine, and wonderfully preserved fuel Coke Ovens from the mid-nineteenth century attract visitors from all over.

I would like to take the time to show my appreciation to the Town of Florence for their positive additions to Arizona through timeless beauty, employment, and state pride. Florence's distinctive history over the last 150 years contributes to the unique characteristics shared in the state of Arizona. It is my honor to serve the Town of Florence and wish them a happy 150th anniversary.

RECOGNIZING THE BRAIN INJURY CENTER OF VENTURA COUNTY

HON. JULIA BROWNLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, in conjunction with Brain Injury Awareness Month, I rise to recognize the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County, an organization wholeheartedly dedicated to raising awareness, providing support and resources to survivors and caregivers impacted by brain injury.

Beginning as a grassroots organization in 1995, the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County has grown into an outstanding network that supports an estimated 16,000 people living with traumatic brain injury in Ventura County, as well as thousands of stroke survivors with acquired brain injuries.

Through far-reaching and impactful community outreach efforts, the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County provides education and awareness about the organization's programs, services and brain injury prevention information. In 2015 alone, the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County assisted more than 800 survivors and caregivers to re-establish life after brain injury and develop strategies to build social skills, as well as provide support to families and caregivers.

Today, the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County is collaborating with community

healthcare partners, including the Ventura County Medical Center's Trauma Department, to launch the "Care Transitions Demonstration Project." This initiative will allow the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County to support severe brain injury survivors from the point of trauma through post hospital discharge. The Brain Injury Center of Ventura County also works diligently to provide information to patients with mild to moderate brain injuries and concussions in emergency rooms.

Moreover, the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County has helped caregivers develop strategies to meet their personal goals and deal with the challenges in the caregiver-survivor relationship. Some of the organization's services and programs include support groups, courses in social skills and vocational skills, internships, and referral assistance for medical specialists, neuro assessments, counseling, rehabilitation, housing, transportation, employment, financial planning, education and so much more.

For the organization's extensive history and work to improve the quality of life for all individuals impacted by brain injury and their significant efforts and contributions to provide support, resources and awareness for brain injury survivors and caregivers throughout the region, I am honored to recognize the Brain Injury Center of Ventura County.

MAJORITY RULE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Claire Jeffress attends Dawson High School in Pearland, Texas. The essay topic is: Majority Rule.

While growing up and learning about the differences between right and wrong, one is often taught about being fair. When being first taught about the majority rule, I was told one uses the majority rule to be fair to all parties involved. Majority rule is defined as a political principle in which the greater percentage of people who share the same view should exercise greater power. Intuitively this makes sense. If most people want to pick Joe to be President, then Joe should be President. However, we must make sure that Majority Rule does not become Majority Tyranny. Nazi Germany is an example of how devastating an impact a brainwashed majority can have on the very lives of a religious minority. Majority rule should only be applied until the point that it infringes on the liberty of another.

In America, one of the ways we have balanced majority rule with individual rights is

that we have enshrined each person's rights in our constitution. In many countries, if the majority does not like what you say, they can stop you from saying your point of view. Here, our right of free speech is protected by the constitution. Similarly, I am entitled to go to church and share my religious beliefs even if others feel differently. The majority is not allowed to vote away my right to speak my opinion or my right to exercise my beliefs. In many other countries, I can be thrown in jail just for sharing my views or going to a church that the majority doesn't believe in. America balances the will of the majority with the rights of the individual by enshrining those rights in our Constitution.

America also protects the individual by having checks and balances in our three branches of government. Venezuela is a good example of where majority rule can go wrong. The people of Venezuela elected Hugo Chavez as their leader. Unfortunately, it was an example of one person, one vote, one time. Mr. Chavez used his power of the majority to steal and redistribute money from individuals to his majority. He also put many of his own people in the courts to ensure that only his voting majority was protected. People who disagreed with his policies were jailed and had their property confiscated. In America, we have an independent Supreme Court and Congress that can override the President if he tries to violate individual rights in our constitution. I cannot be punished just because I disagree with the President.

Many people sometimes think of Democracy as a simple example of majority rule. This thinking is too simplistic. Our founding fathers realized that simple majority rule would just lead to another country torn apart by a tyranny of the majority. They ensured individual liberties were protected through our Constitution and three branches of government. Once the individual was protected, the majority could determine our policies and direction.

TRIBUTE TO AIR FORCE 2ND LIEUTENANT ESTEBAN HOTESSE, TUSKEGEE AIRMAN, DOMINICAN-AMERICAN

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, as Dominican-Americans across our great nation celebrated their heritage and their compatriots commemorated Dominican Independence Day on February 27th, 2016. Today I rise to posthumously honor and pay tribute to Tuskegee Airman Second Lieutenant Esteban (Stephen) Hotesse (Service Number 32218759).

Esteban Hotesse, a Dominican native who immigrated to the country as a child, enlisted during World War II, and served in the lauded Tuskegee Airmen brigade. Though his team was scheduled to go into battle, they never saw combat abroad. As a member of the all-black unit, Hotesse was among a group of 101 Tuskegee Airmen officers arrested for refusing to follow Jim Crow orders from a white commanding officer at a base near Seymour, Indiana, where the KKK had a strong presence.

In March 1945, the last of the Tuskegee groups, the 477th Medium Bombardment Group, was moved from Godman Field, adjacent to Fort Knox, to Freeman Field because of the latter's better flight facilities. Tensions

between the 477th and the white command structure on the base were tense as soon as the 477th arrived, and shortly thereafter, an incident occurred unparalleled in Air Corps history.

Upon their arrival at Freeman, the commanding officer of the base, Colonel Robert R. Selway, moved quickly to set up and enforce a segregated system. The group was housed in a dilapidated building. Col. Selway also created a novel system to deny the Airmen entry into the officers' club. He classified the Black airmen as "trainees," even though they had all finished flight school, and therefore were all commissioned officers. As trainees, they were forced to use a rundown, former noncommissioned officers club nicknamed "Uncle Tom's Cabin." This all occurred despite an order issued in 1940 issued by President Roosevelt himself that no officer should be denied access to any officer's club. On April 5, 1945 a group of the Airmen peacefully entered the officers' club in protest. Sixty-one were arrested within 24 hours. This act of disobedience later became known as the Freeman Field Mutiny. Hotesse perished later that year in an accidental plane crash. His obituary in a Dominican newspaper lists his cause of death as a B-25 crash in the Ohio River in Indiana.

Esteban (Stephen) Hotesse was born on February 2, 1919 in Moca, Dominican Republic, and he came to the U.S. at the age of 4 with his mother, Clara Pacheco, who at the time was 25 years old. Hotesse was also accompanied by his sister Irma Hotesse, age 2. They came through the famous port of Ellis Island and, like many Dominicans at the time, went to live in my Congressional District within Upper Manhattan. At the time of his enlistment, he was living with his wife, Iristella Lind, who was Puerto Rican. They applied for U.S. citizenship in April 1943 after he'd served almost a year. The couple had two daughters before he enlisted. Today, one of his daughters, Mary Lou Hotesse, resides in New York City and two granddaughters, one named Iris Rivera, live in the South.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our distinguished colleagues join me in paying tribute to one of our nation's heroes. In life, he immigrated to our shores to join ranks with our military force in the advancement of peace, justice, and freedom here and abroad.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VICKY HARTZLER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, March 15, 2016, I was unable to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: on roll call no. 118, NAY.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on March 15, I missed a series of Roll Call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "YEA"

on Numbers 114, 115, 116, 117, and 123 and voted "NAY" on Numbers 118, 119, 120, 121, and 122.

SYRIAN IMMIGRATION

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Cameron Lavine attends George Ranch High School in Richmond, Texas. The essay topic is: Select an important event that has occurred in the past year and explain how that event has changed/shaped our country.

Throughout history, the United States has been a beacon of hope for immigrants around the world. Beginning in the early 1700's, when the first of the Scots-Irish immigrants came to America, we have generally been extremely welcoming to foreigners, even if we did not necessarily want them. The Scots-Irish, more specifically the Paxton Boys, caused many problems for Americans and Native Americans, yet, despite the danger they presented to society, the Scots-Irish were still allowed to enter the United States. Then, in the mid-1800's, there was a wave of Irish immigrants because of the famine and there was a wave of Chinese immigrants into America. Although Chinese immigration was later on restricted, people were still allowed to enter this country. There are many other groups of people who have been able to seek refuge in the United States as well, and the latest asylum seekers are the Syrians who have been displaced by the poverty and violence that resulted from a civil war. However, instead of opening our arms and providing assistance to those in need as we have done in the past, many people want to close off the United States.

The number of Syrian refugees has increased severely over the past year, creating a large burden on European and Middle Eastern nations such as Greece, Germany, and Turkey. Many of these countries are calling upon the United States to take action since they are the current hegemonic power. However, a majority of American politicians believe that we should ignore that call. This humanitarian crisis has turned into an ethical dilemma: Should the United States accept the Syrian refugees who are trying to escape poverty and violence despite the potential dangers, or should we close our doors in order to protect national security? This event has really sent the traditional belief that the United States is safe haven for anyone trying to escape persecution, violence, and poverty into a tailspin. For the first time, the U.S. is considering turning its back on those in need, a direct contrast to past events where America was a willing safe-haven for those seeking asylum.

HONORING JOHN AND DENISE
KURTZ OF PENNSYLVANIA

HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to honor John and Denise Kurtz on their retirement after more than 62 years of combined Federal service to the United States of America.

With 32 years of service, John began his Federal Government career as a GS-1 Clerk Typist with the United States Army Logistics Evaluation Agency. He rose through the ranks primarily working in financial operations and concluding his career as Director, DLA Finance Distribution. Through his financial acumen, I understand he was instrumental to the success and execution of the Defense Management Review Decision 902, as well as, numerous Base Realignment and Closure and A-76 actions. Always committed to continuous process improvement and stewardship excellence, John shared his innovative ideas and proactively developed financial solutions that enabled DLA Distribution to provide premiere distribution support to the Department of Defense and other government agencies.

With 30 years of service, Denise began her Federal Government career as a Payroll Clerk, GS-3, with the Defense Depot Mechanicsburg and rose through various diverse assignments, concluding her career as Acting Director, Distribution Policy and Processing at Defense Logistics Agency Distribution. Denise was instrumental in spearheading major initiatives integral to the organization's Inventory Integrity and Stock Readiness Programs, while regularly seeking opportunities to improve processes and procedures ensuring that the organization provided effective, efficient and best value logistics solutions to our Nation's military.

From the beginning of their careers, the Kurtz's exhibited professionalism and devotion to duty—the standard by which all civil servants are to be measured.

On behalf of the people of Pennsylvania's Fourth Congressional District, it's with great pride that I congratulate John and Denise Kurtz on their retirement after more than 62 years of combined service to the United States of America.

HONORING MR. JOHN BILLINGSLEY

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the honoring of John Billingsley, a founder and Chief Executive Officer of Tri Global Energy, in the Dallas Business Journal's "2015 Who's Who in Energy." Mr. Billingsley has worked in a variety of industries including commercial real estate, banking, and manufacturing. However with Tri Global Energy, headquartered in Dallas, Texas, his focus is on wind power in Texas.

Mr. Billingsley was born south of Lubbock, Texas on a cotton farm and attended college at Texas Tech University where he graduated

with a Bachelor of Business Administration with a major in Accounting. Among other admirable ventures, he co-founded a CPA firm, Johnson Kubica & Co. that later merged into Arthur Young, and served as Chairman of the Board and President of the Western State Bank of Midland.

Billingsley founded Tri Global Energy in January of 2009 when a few wind developers approached him asking to lease his land. Tri Global Energy now leases land in Texas to a renewable energy developers and has become a solar energy developer and provider as well. The company's "Wind Force Plan" allows for ownership and partnership for landowners, stakeholders, and local communities who are involved in their wind projects—creating a strong community within the company.

Tri Global Energy is now the top developer of wind energy projects in Texas, and reflects the growing diversity of energy production in the state of Texas. Billingsley has wind generation projects under development in Texas and New Mexico that could potentially produce some 6,600 megawatts of power when they become fully operational. He has proven himself to be a valuable member of the North Texas business community and leading energy entrepreneur in the state of Texas, and I am honored to recognize him as a constituent of my district.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to recognize the career of John Billingsley. I ask all of my distinguished colleagues to join me in celebrating this milestone in his remarkable life.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF VIVIEN HAIG

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the achievements and contributions of my good friend Vivien Haig as she steps down from her position as director-general of the Transatlantic Policy Network.

Over the years, Vivien has encouraged international cooperation through her work with the Transatlantic Policy Network (TPN), the Transatlantic Business Dialogue, the Atlantic Council, the Global Business Dialogue on Electronic Commerce, and the Hong Kong—Europe Business Cooperation Committee. Vivien has served as director-general of TPN since its founding in 1992. A natural communicator with experience in non-profit entrepreneurship, Vivien understood TPN's potential to strengthen the transatlantic partnership and worked diligently to turn TPN into a highly effective network with a reputation for getting things done. She focuses on bringing together business leaders, think tank contributors, and elected officials for constructive dialogue on policy issues important to both sides of the Atlantic.

Another example of Vivien's leadership is the annual success of TPN's Transatlantic Week in Washington, DC. Each year, Transatlantic Week has been an unprecedented opportunity to engage in candid conversations with policy leaders at the highest level. Vivien played an invaluable role in convening a diverse group of people dedicated to the success of our transatlantic partnership. Partici-

pants appreciate the chance to dive into timely discussions with Members of Congress, Members of European Parliament, industry leaders, and prominent officials such as U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman, former World Bank President Robert B. Zoellick, EU Ambassador to the U.S. David O'Sullivan, U.S. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman, and many more.

Leaders around the world have commended Vivien for her capacity to build relationships based on trust and mutual understanding. Regardless if Vivien holds an official position or provides informal advice, anyone who has worked with Vivien knows they can rely on her quick wit, attention to detail, and practical approach to develop innovative ideas. It is no surprise the European American Business Council honored Vivien by naming her as the 2008 private sector recipient of the Atlantic Leadership Award. Her innate ability to bring people together will continue to reap benefits for the transatlantic relationship in years to come.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor and respect that I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Vivien Haig and her many contributions to the U.S.-European partnership. Most importantly, I want to personally thank Vivien for her friendship over the years. We would not be where we are today without your vision and leadership.

HONORING MR. KENNETH H. HOFMANN

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Kenneth Hofmann, owner of the Rancho Esquon Wildlife Area and wetlands steward par excellence, for his commitment to community development and wildlife preservation.

Mr. Hofmann, a lifelong Californian, has spent most of the past three decades working to promote philanthropy, educational and artistic initiatives, and wildlife conservation. In 1990, Mr. Hofmann purchased Rancho Esquon, a sprawling agricultural property in Butte County, and began working to restore its natural habitat. Today, the ranch boasts over 900 acres of wetlands, is home to more than 20,000 trees and 173 species of birds, and serves as a valuable educational resource. Over 4,000 students have taken class field trips to Rancho Esquon, many of whom have returned to visit the site's egg salvage facility.

Today, to further expose and educate regarding the importance of our wetlands, Mr. Hofmann is in the process of building the Pacific Flyway Center, a world-class museum and zoo facility in Suisun Marsh. The Center is dedicated to inspiring conservation of the Pacific Flyway, a critical migratory route stretching from Alaska to Patagonia. Every year, at least one billion birds migrate along the Flyway, and its importance to waterfowl populations cannot be overstated. Upon completion, the Center will offer educational opportunities for local students and citizens.

Mr. Hofmann's charitable organization, The Hofmann Family Foundation (HFF), has worked for over 20 years to help young people

in need. In 1995, a \$1 million donation from the HFF created the Concord Community Youth Center, which today provides educational and athletic opportunities for 1,900 underprivileged young people. And in 2014, Mr. Hofmann donated funds to create the De La Salle Academy, a division of De La Salle High School dedicated to providing high-quality education for boys whose financial circumstances would otherwise prevent private schooling. By the end of 2016, the Academy will have 80 students enrolled in the fifth and sixth grades.

Mr. Speaker, Kenneth Hofmann has dedicated his time and resources for nearly 40 years to enriching the lives of California's young people and protecting its environment. Mr. Hofmann's efforts have benefitted our community enormously, and it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

ELUSIVE CRIME WAVE DATA SHOWS FRIGHTENING TOLL OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT CRIMINALS

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following:

[From FoxNews.com, Sept. 16, 2015]

ELUSIVE CRIME WAVE DATA SHOWS FRIGHTENING TOLL OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT CRIMINALS

(By Malia Zimmerman)

The federal government can tell you how many "Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders" stole a car, the precise number of "American Indian or Alaska Natives" who were arrested for vagrancy or how many whites were busted for counterfeiting in any given year. But the government agencies that crunch crime numbers are utterly unable—or unwilling—to pinpoint for the public how many illegal immigrants are arrested within U.S. borders each year.

In the absence of comprehensive data, FoxNews.com examined a patchwork of local, state and federal statistics that revealed a wildly disproportionate number of murderers, rapists and drug dealers are crossing into the U.S. amid the wave of hard-working families seeking a better life. The explosive figures show illegal immigrants are three times as likely to be convicted of murder as members of the general population and account for far more crimes than their 3.5-percent share of the U.S. population would suggest. Critics say it is no accident that local, state and federal governments go to great lengths to keep the data under wraps.

"There are a lot of reasons states don't make this information readily available, and there is no clearinghouse of data at high levels," said former Department of Justice attorney J. Christian Adams, who has conducted exhaustive research on the subject. "These numbers would expose how serious the problem is and make the government look bad."

Adams called illegal immigrant crime a "wave of staggering proportions." He and other experts noted that the issue has been dragged into the spotlight by a spate of cases in which illegal immigrants with criminal records killed people after being released from custody because of incoherent procedures and a lack of cooperation between local and federal law enforcement officials.

The murders, including the July 1 killing of Kathryn Steinle, allegedly by an illegal immigrant in San Francisco, have left grieving loved ones angry and confused, local and federal officials pointing fingers at one another and the voting public demanding secure borders and swift deportation of non-citizen criminals.

"Every one (of the recent cases) was preventable through better border security and enforcing immigration laws," said Jessica Vaughan, director of policy studies at the Center for Immigration Studies. "They should have been sent back to their home country instead of being allowed to stay here and have the opportunity to kill Americans."

A spokesperson for U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement told FoxNews.com that comprehensive statistics on illegal immigrant crime are not available from the federal government, and suggested contacting county, state and federal jail and prison systems individually to compose a tally, a process that would encompass thousands of local departments.

FoxNews.com did review reports from immigration reform groups and various government agencies, including the U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Sentencing Commission, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Government Accountability Office, the Bureau of Justice Statistics and several state and county correctional departments. Statistics show the estimated 11.7 million illegal immigrants in the U.S. account for 13.6 percent of all offenders sentenced for crimes committed in the U.S. Twelve percent of murder sentences, 20 percent of kidnapping sentences and 16 percent of drug trafficking sentences are meted out to illegal immigrants.

There are approximately 2.1 million legal or illegal immigrants with criminal convictions living free or behind bars in the U.S., according to ICE's Secure Communities office. Each year, about 900,000 legal and illegal immigrants are arrested, and 700,000 are released from jail, prison, or probation. ICE estimates that there are more than 1.2 million criminal aliens at large in the U.S.

In the most recent figures available, a Government Accountability Office report titled, "Criminal Alien Statistics," found there were 55,000 illegal immigrants in federal prison and 296,000 in state and local lockups in 2011. Experts agree those figures have almost certainly risen, although executive orders from the Obama administration may have changed the status of thousands who previously would have been counted as illegal immigrants.

Hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrant criminals are being deported. In 2014, ICE removed 315,943 criminal illegal immigrants nationwide, 85 percent of whom had previously been convicted of a criminal offense. But that same year, ICE released onto U.S. streets another 30,558 criminal illegal immigrants with a combined 79,059 criminal convictions including 86 homicides, 186 kidnappings, and thousands of sexual assaults, domestic violence assaults and DUIs, Vaughan said. As of August, ICE had already released at least 10,246 criminal aliens.

David Inserra, a policy analyst for Homeland Security and Cybersecurity at The Heritage Foundation, said letting illegal immigrants convicted of crimes go free while they await deportation hearings is putting the public at risk.

"While it is not certain how many of these individuals were here illegally, most of these individuals were in deportation proceedings and should have been detained or at least more closely supervised and monitored until their deportation order was finalized and executed," Inserra said.

Adams opened a rare window into the dearth of public data when he obtained an in-

ternal report compiled by the Texas Department of Public Safety and revealed its contents on his Pajamas Media blog. The report showed that between 2008 and 2014, noncitizens in Texas—a group that includes illegal and legal immigrants—committed 611,234 crimes, including nearly 3,000 homicides. Adams told FoxNews.com that other states have also closely tracked illegal immigrant crime, especially in the wake of 9/11, but said the statistical sorting "is done behind closed doors." States closely guard the statistics out of either fear of reprisals from the federal government or out of their leaders' own insistence on downplaying the burden of illegal immigrant crime, he said.

"There are a lot of reasons states don't make this information readily available and there is no clearinghouse of data at high levels," Adams said. "These numbers would expose how serious the problem is and make the government look bad."

A smattering of statistics can be teased out of data made public in other states heavily impacted by illegal immigration, although a full picture or apples-to-apples comparison remains elusive.

In Florida, there were 5,061 illegal immigrant inmates in state prison facilities as of June 30, but neither the state Department of Corrections nor the Florida Department of Law Enforcement track the number in county prisons, spokesmen for those agencies told FoxNews.com.

In Illinois, where state prisons house 46,993 inmates, some 3,755 are illegal immigrants, according to Illinois Department of Corrections figures. Once again, state officials do not compile figures for county jails, although a Cook County official estimated that nearly 6 percent were illegal immigrants.

In Arizona, neither state public safety officials nor the governor's office could produce figures showing the number of criminal illegal immigrants held in county jails, but state prison figures released by the Arizona Department of Corrections show out of 42,758 prisoners held in state facilities in July, about 10.8 percent were illegal immigrants.

In California, there were 128,543 inmates in custody as of Aug. 12, but the state, which has been criticized for its leniency toward illegal immigrants, no longer keeps track of the citizenship status of inmates. As of July 31, 2013, the last time figures were documented, there were as many as 18,000 "foreign-born" citizens in California state prisons of 133,000 incarcerated. The Board of State and Community Corrections provided figures to Fox News from 2014, showing there were 142,000 inmates in 120 county prisons, but while everything from mental health cases to dental and medical appointments are closely tracked, the number of illegal aliens—or even non citizens—is not.

"Frankly, this is something every state should track, but they don't. Not even ICE publishes this much information on offenders and immigration status," Vaughan said.

Several pro-immigration groups contacted by FoxNews.com declined to comment on the outsized role illegal immigrants play in the U.S. criminal justice system. One group that did insist that even illegal immigrants provide a net benefit to the U.S.

"Immigrants, regardless of their legal status, make valuable contributions to our economy as workers, business owners, taxpayers and consumers," said Erin Oshiro, of Asian Americans Advancing Justice. "We need an immigration system that keeps families together, protects workers, and prioritizes due process and human rights."

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Connor Cerda attends Seven Lakes High School in Katy, Texas. The essay topic is: Select an important event that has occurred in the past year and explain how that event has changed/shaped our country.

On June 26, 2015, the Supreme Court ruled that state level bans on same-sex marriage was unconstitutional. It also ruled that the denial of same-sex marriage licenses and the refusal to perform same-sex marriages was no longer allowed. This has been a very controversial topic for decades and through this ruling, it truly showed where America as a country is heading.

In the eyes of Christians and pastors around the U.S., this ruling spat in God's face and in the founding fathers' faces of this great nation. They founded this nation on the teachings of the Bible, but every generation since has fallen away. The Bible specifically describes marriage as the unity of man and woman and that is what it was intended to be for all of eternity. Christians, by no means, hate homosexuals or those who practice same-sex marriage; but rather, Christians hate the practice of it. It breaks the hearts of Christ followers to see people fall into this sin and false illusion that this practice is okay. As for pastors, this ruling is even more troubling to them. They are now under pressure from the public to perform these marriage ceremonies and recognize these same-sex couples even though it goes against all that they stand for and believe in. However, those who refuse often face harsh public criticism. On a religious standpoint, this ruling has affected the relationship between church and state. Although separate, it is hard to trust a government to protect one's religious rights if they make decisions that directly oppose what this country was so proudly founded upon and what people strongly believe in.

This nation was founded on strong and bold principles that not many countries share. The fact that the U.S. is changing these principles is disturbing. And for what benefit? There is no clear reason or purpose to pass this ruling besides it was what a group of people wanted and the U.S. government gave in. There is no positive outcome or benefit that has been reaped from this ruling. It is scary to think about what other principles this nation is willing to sacrifice. If anything, it created a gap between the citizens of this nation and the country as a whole. A certain level of trust was lost that will be extremely hard to gain back. It also creates a messed up view from the perspectives of other countries. They look at the U.S. and see a screwed up society that believes

marrying the same sex is okay and a given right to people. This country is socially going down hill through the decisions made by the government and the people and this ruling was just another step towards this fall.

INTRODUCTION OF THE EMERGENCY FINANCIAL MANAGER REFORM ACT OF 2016

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, the Emergency Financial Manager Reform Act of 2016 is intended to ensure that state-appointed emergency financial managers for municipalities in fiscal distress do not violate Constitutional protections, ensure public health and safety, and are accountable stewards of taxpayer funds. The bill responds to problems presented when unaccountable emergency financial managers usurp local elected officials and unilaterally make decisions that jeopardize public health and safety.

Across our Nation, there are many cities in financial distress still struggling to recover from the Great Recession and other factors undermining their economic recovery. While most states work cooperatively with their cities to foster economic stability and growth, others such as my home state of Michigan, use draconian, autocratic laws that usurp local elected officials and replace them with unaccountable political appointees—typically known as emergency financial managers—who, through their vast powers, can jeopardize the health and safety of those who live and work in these struggling cities.

In Michigan, for example, the root cause of the hazardous condition of Flint's lead-contaminated drinking water and the Detroit Public School System's buildings is the unaccountable emergency financial managers appointed by our Governor, Rick Snyder. This law and its implementation threaten not only our citizens' health and safety, but our fundamental Constitutional values and principles.

In addition, extreme emergency financial manager laws frequently facilitate conflicts of interest and mismanagement and can be used to contravene important federal and state constitutional protections for collective bargaining agreements. They can authorize emergency financial managers to unilaterally reject collective bargaining agreements and other contractual obligations and thereby negate years of hard earned worker pension benefits. These are not just problems in Michigan, as it has been suggested that Atlantic City, which is also in financial distress, be taken over by an unaccountable emergency financial manager with broad powers similar to those available in Michigan.

The Emergency Financial Manager Reform Act responds to these serious concerns by authorizing the Attorney General to reallocate five percent of the law enforcement funds that would otherwise be allocated to a state under the Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program (Byrne-JAG), which provides funding to states for law enforcement purposes, if it is determined that the state appointed emergency financial manager violates any one of seven common sense safeguards:

Protection Against Discriminatory Impact on Voting—This provision requires the state that has appointed an emergency financial manager to submit a certification to the Attorney General (and every 18 months after such appointment if the tenure of the emergency financial manager continues beyond such period) that the appointment: (A) has neither the purpose nor the effect of denying, abridging, or diluting the right to vote on account of race or color; and (B) the community for which the emergency financial manager is sought to be appointed has had an opportunity to comment, on the impact of such appointment may have on voting rights.

Protection Against States Ignoring Adverse Impacts on Voting Rights—This provision requires the Attorney General to receive copies of all public comments submitted in response to the notice required above and to interpose an objection to the certification.

Protection Against Harm to Public Health and Safety—This provision requires the emergency financial manager before making decisions affecting public health or safety, including the disbursement of any emergency funds provided by any federal or state entity for the purpose of addressing lead or other contamination of drinking water in a public water system, to receive prior approval from the governor and local elected officials.

Protection Against Conflicts of Interest, Mismanagement, and Abuse of Discretion—This provision requires the emergency financial manager to have adequate oversight to ensure against conflicts of interest, mismanagement, and abuse of discretion.

Protection Against Unilateral Rejection of Other Contracts—This provision provides that the emergency financial manager may not reject, modify, or terminate an existing contract without mutual consent or unless such rejection, modification, or termination is approved by a federal bankruptcy court.

Protection Against Rejection of Collective Bargaining Agreements—This provision provides that the emergency financial manager may not reject, modify, or terminate a collective bargaining agreement without mutual consent of the parties.

Protection Against the Failure to Provide Public Notice and Opportunity to Comment—This provision ensures that the public—before an emergency financial manager is appointed—is provided notice and the opportunity to comment on whether the appointee has any conflicts of interest, whether he or she has the requisite experience and financial acumen, and whether the appointee is empowered to propose sources of financial assistance, such as loans, grants and revenue sharing. The public must also be given the name of a state official designated to receive complaints from the public about the appointee's conflicts of interest, mismanagement, or dereliction of duty.

The objective of the legislation is not to deny Byrne-JAG grant funds, but rather to incentivize the states to protect their citizens against these risks and abuses when emergency financial managers are appointed. However, if in the event the funds are withheld, they are directly reallocated to the local government for which an emergency financial manager is appointed.

We can and must stand together to make sure that the unaccountable emergency financial managers responsible for these man-

made disasters—and the legal system that empowered them—are not permitted to inflict further harm on our citizens.

TRIBUTE TO PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY POLICE OFFICER JACAI COLSON

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my condolences and prayers to the family of Prince George's Police Officer Jacai Colson, who died in the line of duty last Sunday just before his 29th birthday. The senseless, callous, and unprovoked death of Officer Colson reminds us that our men in blue risk their lives every day for our safety. In his four years of service on the force, Officer Colson was dedicated to his community. His friends and family describe him as a natural leader with an infectious smile who followed in his grandfather's footsteps to become a police officer. Officer Colson served as an undercover narcotics officer and was placed frequently in high risk situations—risks that he took because he knew he was making a difference. Our community lost a true hero who every day put his life at risk for the rest of us. His loss is a tragedy for his family, his fellow officers, and our State. I offer my deep condolences to all who knew Officer Colson in this time of grief.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be present for votes taken on the House floor on March 3, 2016, and March 14, 2016, as I was unavoidably detained.

Had I been present, I would have voted 'NO' on Roll Call Vote Number 106, 'NO' on Roll Call Vote Number 107, 'AYE' on Roll Call Vote Number 108, 'YES' on Roll Call Vote Number 109, 'NO' on Roll Call Vote Number 110, 'AYE' on Roll Call Vote Number 111, 'AYE' on Roll Call Vote Number 112, and 'AYE' on Roll Call Vote Number 113.

TRIBUTE TO EAGLE SCOUT ANDREW JONES

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Andrew Jones of Boy Scout Troop 729 in Treynor, Iowa for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

The Eagle Scout rank is the highest advancement rank in scouting. Only about five percent of Boy Scouts earn the Eagle Scout Award. The award is a performance-based achievement with high standards that have been well-maintained for more than a century.

To earn the Eagle Scout rank, a Boy Scout is obligated to pass specific tests that are organized by requirements and merit badges, as well as completing an Eagle Project to benefit the community. For his project, Andrew planned and implemented the installation of a new fence and other grounds maintenance at the Fairview Pioneer Memorial Chapel. He is also an active member of his community and participates in local food drives, flag retirement ceremonies, and highway litter removal projects. The work ethic Andrew has shown in his Eagle Project and every other project leading up to his Eagle Scout rank speaks volumes of his commitment to serving a cause greater than himself and assisting his community.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by this young man and his supportive family demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication and perseverance. I am honored to represent Andrew and his family in the United States Congress. I ask that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating him on reaching the rank of Eagle Scout and in wishing him nothing but continued success in his future education and career.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I missed ten votes on March 15. If I were present, I would have voted on the following:

Rollcall No. 114: On Ordering the Previous Question, "yea."

Rollcall No. 115: On Passage of H. Res. 640, "yea."

Rollcall No. 116: On Passage of H.R. 2081, "yea."

Rollcall No. 117: On Passage of H.R. 3447, "yea."

Rollcall No. 118: On Passage of Pallone Amendment No. 1 to H.R. 3797, "nay."

Rollcall No. 119: On Passage of Pallone Amendment No. 2 to H.R. 3797, "nay."

Rollcall No. 120: On Passage of Bera Amendment to H.R. 3797, "nay."

Rollcall No. 121: On Passage of Veasey Amendment to H.R. 3797, "nay."

Rollcall No. 122: On the Motion to Recommend with Instructions, "nay."

Rollcall No. 123: On Passage of H.R. 3797, "yea."

HONORING JIM GREER

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor Jim Greer, Veteran Service Officer of Stanislaus County Veterans Services Office, on his retirement and to thank him for his dedicated service to our Nations heroes.

After serving 30 years, Jim retired as a Command Master Chief Petty Officer in the Navy. Following his service, he applied for a

Veterans Services Representative position in Stanislaus County, and was hired in April of 1993. At first, the Veterans Services Office was serving about 50 to 60 veterans a month. Within six months of Jim's service, the office was seeing nearly 500 veterans a month.

As a Veterans Service Officer, Jim gladly accepted tremendous responsibilities including: visiting the local Veterans Service Organizations, training work study students to become Veterans Representatives, and personally assisting as many veterans as he could.

Jim has played a vital role in acquiring a Veterans Center and a VA Community Base Outpatient Clinic in Modesto, California, improving assistance to veterans in the area. As a member of the California Association of County Veterans Services Officers, Jim has been asked to speak at various conferences and events to raise awareness on administrative issues in order to benefit local veterans.

An active member of my Veterans Advisory Committee, Jim plays an essential role to reach out to the Veterans population with the most current information regarding bills, issues, and needs.

Jim has changed the lives of thousands of veterans through his dedication and commitment over the last 23 years. He lives by the motto, "if Veterans don't help each other, no one else will" and he has truly lived up to that commitment.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring and recognizing my friend for his unwavering leadership, many accomplishments, and contributions on behalf of the veteran community and his service to the United States of America.

CONGRATULATING I.C. NORCOM HIGH SCHOOL'S BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a talented group of young athletes who have distinguished themselves as giants on the basketball court, making their school, their community, and the city of Portsmouth, Virginia very proud. The I.C. Norcom High School boys basketball team had another remarkable season and I am honored to recognize their accomplishments.

On March 12, 2016, the I.C. Norcom Greyhounds beat the Hopewell Blue Devils 67 to 65, to win the Group 3A state basketball championship. It was truly a remarkable game. In overtime, I.C. Norcom tied the game and with only seconds left on the clock, the Greyhounds' Travis Fields stole the ball from the Blue Devils, successfully hit a jump shot, clinching another championship for I.C. Norcom.

The Greyhounds have had a consistent run of excellence in recent years. This year's victory is I.C. Norcom's third consecutive state title and their fifth state title in the last seven seasons. It goes without saying, but I.C. Norcom has certainly become a force to be reckoned with in Virginia high school sports.

I.C. Norcom High School was founded in 1913 as the High Street School, the first public high school for black students in Portsmouth. It was renamed in 1953 in honor of its first su-

pervising principal, Israel Charles Norcom, a pioneering educator, civic leader and businessman. Now, more than 100 years and three locations later, I.C. Norcom High School is still an innovating and inspiring place for Portsmouth students.

In addition to excelling on the basketball court, the Greyhounds are also doing great things in the classroom. I.C. Norcom houses a Center of Excellence in Math and Science, which provides students with additional classes in science, math, and technology. Seniors completing the Center's curriculum this year will receive Center of Excellence Diplomas which require five science course credits, one more than necessary under the advanced diploma. In addition, I.C. Norcom students have been participating in the First College program—attending Tidewater Community College this semester and taking up to 14 college credits before they graduate. I.C. Norcom is doing a great job cultivating excellence both on and off the athletic field.

I would like to extend my enthusiastic congratulations to each of the Greyhounds' players, their families, Principal Shameka Pollard, Coach Leon Goolsby and his entire coaching staff, on the occasion of another amazing state championship victory. On behalf of the citizens of Virginia's Third Congressional District, I commend the Greyhounds for this historic win and wish the program many more years of continued success.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 17, 2016 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

APRIL 5

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the effects of consumer finance regulations.

SD-538

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine recent Iranian actions and implementation of the nuclear deal.

SD-419

APRIL 6

2 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower

To hold hearings to examine Navy ship-building programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-222

APRIL 7

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and
Urban Affairs

Business meeting to consider the nominations of Jay Neal Lerner, of Illinois, to be Inspector General, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and Amias Moore Gerety, of Connecticut, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's Semi-Annual Report to Congress.

SD-538

APRIL 13

2 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower

To hold hearings to examine Marine Corps ground modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-232A

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

To hold hearings to examine ballistic missile defense policies and programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-222

APRIL 14

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and
Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on Economic Policy

To hold joint hearings to examine current trends and changes in the fixed-income markets.

SD-538

APRIL 20

2 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower

To hold hearings to examine Navy and Marine Corps aviation programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2017 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-232A

APRIL 27

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Government Accountability Office report on "Telecommunications: Additional Coordination and Performance Measurement Needed for High-Speed Internet Access Programs on Tribal Lands."

SD-628